INDIA AT THE CROSS ROADS

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With a

FOREWORD

by the Right Hon.

LORD MESTON, K.C.S.I.

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FOREWORD

AT a time when we are reading, or ought to be reading, the report of Sir John Simon's Commission, all side-lights upon its difficult theme are welcome. In this small book we shall find illumination of particular value, because it is written by one who knows India intimately and is in sympathy with its people. Its chief value lies, if I may say so, in getting us down to facts, to the real India, whose destiny is in the balances, and whose interests are in some danger of being obscured by rhapsody and sentiment. The author takes us behind this screen and shows us the grim realities, which are involved in any constitutional change.

Rarely has a more momentous decision been required of the British people. A vast country, twenty times as large as our own and nearly eight times as populous, has been during the last two centuries redeemed from chaos and misery by the labour of our hands. We have not avoided mistakes, but we have given the country peace and its people justice. We have put down barbarous customs and opened the doors of education. We have greatly increased material prosperity and we have curbed the famines and pestilences, which used to sweep the land.

Thirteen years ago we decided to add to all these things the gift which we value most ourselves, the right of self-government within our Empire. But we made the gift conditional on its being introduced gradually, according as the people showed capacity for their new responsibility. India had not enjoyed political independence for centuries. The present generation of its public men, however skilled in argument and agitation, had no experience of the art of administration; and, as this booklet shows, the task of government is complicated by inherent difficulties, which have no parallel in our Western lands.

In spite of all this, a small section of Indians (extremists, *Swarajists* or Congress men) have set themselves to prove that India is fit for and demands complete and immediate self-government, while some of the hotter heads shout for the separation of India from the British Empire.

They have two methods of trying to convince us. On the one hand, they are working up a popular agitation, which they think will frighten us into concessions. On the other hand, they are pouring out arguments about "the right to freedom, self-determination, justice to an oppressed nation," and the like, in the hope of appealing to our generosity. There is no attempt to prove that they are competent to govern their country in our place. In fact, they deny our right to ask for any such proof. Their case is one of sentiment and theory, and those, who, like the writer of this little book, have lived among the people, know how lightly we ought to weigh theory and sentiment against the well-being of hundreds of millions of our fellow-subjects.

As a nation, we have never been backward in our sympathy with true patriotism or any wise movement towards freedom. But in this case there are even wider sympathies involved, as well as practical commonsense.

At the present moment the Indian extremist is demanding that we should scrap the Simon Commission's report and put India at once into the position of Canada or Australia. The reader of what follows will be able to form his own judgment as to whether this is possible. The Commission's report proposes a practicable and most generous measure of advance. No alternative scheme has been devised by its critics, and when the issues are so enormous, will any sane man be a party to a gigantic leap in the dark?

MESTON.

INDIA AT THE CROSS ROADS

CHAPTER I

The Problem

THE political problems of India not only have a bearing on the happiness of more than 300 million Indians, but have a very practical interest for Britain. One authority has valued our Indian investments at £1,000,000,000, and India takes one-ninth of our exports and is in fact the greatest of all our markets overseas.

The Simon Commission has reported. Appointed to weigh the results of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, introduced in 1921, and to make recommendations for the future government of India, it has recommended great changes in the direction of more responsible government. This book, written without special reference to the Report, and indeed before its publication, is an independent attempt to analyse the facts of the case and indicate the outlines of possible change.

To understand the problem an outline of the constitution of British India and the Indian States is necessary.

The Governor-General (Viceroy) is responsible to the Secretary of State for India and through him to Parliament. From the nature of the case he is allowed freedom in a measure dependent partly on his own personality and that of the Secretary of State, but it is not absolute freedom. The case of Lord Curzon showed the limits of the independence even of a strong Governor-General.

Formerly the method of government under the Governor-General was bureaucratic, that is, it was government by officials.

A new stage in constitutional development began, when Lord Morley by the Indian Councils Act, 1909, set up legislative councils in the Central Government and in each province, though he did not permit their constitution and powers to override government authority.

But the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, initiated by a declaration of policy in 1917 and introduced in 1921, drove a wedge into the front of bureaucracy, by handing over certain departments in the provinces to the control of ministers. The composition of the Legislative Councils in the provinces was changed. Direct election of a majority of members was

introduced and the policy of departments in charge of ministers in the provinces was placed under the control of the legislatures. In different provinces different departments were so "transferred" but in most cases local government affairs, *i.e.*, municipalities and local boards, education (with some reservations), public health, and in part, public works, passed under "popular" control.

But the popular control is exercised, through its representatives, by a small electorate comprising in the different provinces between 1 per cent. and 5 per cent. only of the population.

For the rest administration remains as before in the hands of the officials. Nevertheless certain expenditure in these "reserved" departments also is "voted" and if for instance a Legislative Council makes a big "cut" in the budget provision for the police force, the department has to comply and reduce the "strength", unless the Governor chooses, as sometimes he does, to restore the amount under a special power given him to provide for necessary expenditure.

The Government of India Act of 1919, which instituted the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, provided for an inquiry into their working after ten years, and this inquiry has been conducted by the Simon Commission with the assistance of a committee of the Central Legislative Assembly and of committees of the Provincial Legislative Councils. The desirability or otherwise of an extension of self-government is under consideration. This question is to be considered separately for each province. Necessary changes in the Central Government and the relations between the Central Government and the Provincial Governments will also come under review. There are nine principal provinces: Bengal, Bombay, Madras, the Punjab, Assam, United Provinces, Central Provinces, Bihar and Orissa, and Burma. The North-West Frontier Province and certain other less important areas are still for special reasons under British administration of the bureaucratic type. Before considering possible constitutional changes, it is necessary to realize some disruptive factors in Indian political life, which constitute the chief obstacles to advance.

The Four Hates

Dissension in India is traceable to four hatreds: communal, racial, caste hatred and class hatred. Riots between Hindus and Mahomedans have made everyone familiar with the enmity between these two communities, which, early in 1929 coupled with Communist agitation caused hundreds of casualties in Bombay. In the year 1921 a more serious outbreak, the Moplah Rebellion, involved considerable military

operations and thousands of casualties, while many Hindus only escaped with their lives by unwillingly accepting the Mahomedan faith. Other communal animosities sometimes break out, for example the Gurdwara disputes of 1923 between Sikhs and Hindus. The Sikhs are an offshoot of the Hindu religion and bitter strife was waged by them with the orthodox Hindus for possession of certain shrines. This dispute is now settled. But the Hindu-Moslem enmity persists.

Racial hatred is not universal in India, but it would be futile to deny that this factor sometimes mars the relations of Indians and Europeans, and among Indians themselves it is not completely absent. Pathans, to take a prominent instance, despite the Southerners and the Southerners in return fear or despise them.

Although caste is accepted by the bulk of Hindus as a religious ordinance, opposition between non-Brahmins and Brahmins sometimes in certain areas reaches a high pitch, and the "untouchables" occasionally rebel against the restrictions under which they live, and frequently seek an improvement of their status by conversion to Christianity or Islam.

Class hatred, especially on the part of industrial labourers towards the capitalists, is a factor proved by Communist outbreaks in Bombay and revolutionary agitation against capitalism marked sometimes even by expressions of contempt for the leaders of the "National" Congress. Nevertheless the ex-President of the Congress used this dangerous movement as a weapon against the government.

There can be no Indian nation unless a solution can be found for these four hates. The ideal of Hindu-Moslem unity and attempts to remove the bitterness of caste distinctions deserve approval, but up to date they have failed. Hindu-Moslem enmity rests on conflicting religious ideas and practices and only a new point of view could bring the two communities into harmony. The success of the great Mogul Emperor Akbar in establishing toleration for Hindu, Moslem and Christian alike, though himself by birth at least a Moslem, is of practical interest still, but it involved a departure from the orthodox beliefs of Islam, which is essentially an intolerant faith.

Some of the ascetics have been acclaimed as saints by both Hindu and Moslem and their teaching suggests the possibility of a modification of the two religions, which would render harmony possible.

Turning to purely political considerations it is clear that legislation could obviate some of the usual causes of religious quarrels. Many Indian princes in their own territories

prohibit the slaughter of oxen and cows, which is a frequent occasion of Hindu resentment in British India, and although such legislation is probably not feasible in most parts of India, yet measures could perhaps be devised for minimizing the ill-feeling aroused by this cause.

Why again should not the playing of music by Hindus in front of mosques at least during times of prayer be universally prohibited? Better administrative machinery also is needed for settlement of these difficult questions. Although religion plays an immensely greater part in Indian politics than in our own, yet while we have our Bishops in the House of Lords, the religious authorities of India are outside politics altogether. Perhaps permanent conciliation boards, composed of recognized heads of religious communities, might be set up under the local governments to solve religious disputes. Such bodies might deal with whole provinces, or each district, a unit similar to the English county, could have its own conciliation board, if that plan were more convenient and effective.

In Britain the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Bishops in the House of Lords can, if required, state the position of the Church of England in matters affecting the State. In India, if a question arises whether the followers of one religion are likely to be offended by certain acts of followers of another, there is in many cases no recognized authority to answer the question and propose a solution.

If these questions seem to British readers out of place in a political discussion, it is because they do not realize the all-pervading influence of religion in Indian life, causing riots and bloodshed every year and sometimes on most trivial occasions.

Racial Harmony

Friendships between Indians and Europeans are not uncommon and racial enmity unnecessary. But unfortunately the Briton and the high caste Hindu both often live behind a wall of reserve, and sometimes ignorance on both sides breeds contempt, while a freer exchange of ideas would conduce to mutual respect. The educated Indian is often an interesting companion and accomplished conversationalist and although Indian and Briton have different traditions, each can find something to admire in the other's institutions.

Two well-known difficulties in the mixing of the two peoples in social life are the purdah system and the exclusiveness of some of the European clubs. But even the purdah lady can meet European women, and as for clubs, to-day some of the best clubs, like the Willingdon Club in Bombay, are open to British and Indian alike.

Sport is one means and a promising one of bringing Indian and European together. It is worth while to send Indian cricket, tennis, hockey and polo teams to Britain, where they can give a creditable account of themselves and enlist the friendly interest of the public, whose good opinion of the Indian rests largely on the cricketing prowess of Ranjitsinhji, Duleepsinhji and other great players and the excellence of the Aga Khan's racing stable!

Apart from political jealousies, the Indian is often able and willing to admire the achievements of the white man as engineer, doctor, judge, scientific expert, aviator, and even as soldier. A solid basis exists for friendship between the two races.

Indeed the Indians need not all be regarded as entirely alien from the British in race. The Brahmin might pass as an Italian. Recently in the National Gallery I noticed how Bellini's portrait of Doge Leonardo Loredano would serve for a representation of a high-caste Hindu. Undoubtedly there was an infusion of Greek blood in Northern India. Invader after invader in ancient and medieval times came into India from the North and some brought into India racial elements more akin to the modern European than to the typical Asiatic. The high-caste Hindu is sometimes nearer to the European in race than he is to some of the depressed classes of his own country.

This brings me to the problem of the solution of inter-caste enmity. I must frankly say that many of the Hindu ideas about caste are absurd and this is the opinion of many Hindus. Yet the All-India Brahmin Conference not long ago reaffirmed that the "untouchables" must remain untouchable. This "Diehard" attitude is enough to alienate the sympathy of the civilized world. Its attempted justification is an appeal to religion and antiquity. The answer is that since Vedic times the Hindu religion has undergone many changes and that the modern system of Hindu society is not the same as that of ancient times. Nor is it for that matter any defence of an institution to say that it is old. If the Hindu must keep the relatively harmless distinctions between Brahmins (priests and the learned), Kshatriyas (princes and warriors), Vaisyas (traders and landowners), and Sudras (labourers), let him erase the blot of untouchability. Equalizing tendencies in the modern world are so strong that a people which regards approximately one-fifth of its members as untouchable cannot expect to rank very high in the world's esteem or to be considered fit for the undoubtedly difficult task of self-government.

The fourth hatred, between poor and rich, has recently been exploited by Communist agitators and revolutionaries.

Lord Irwin found it necessary to use his emergency powers in order to make a law, which the Legislative Assembly had rejected, authorizing expulsion from India of non-Indian Communists. Some of the revolutionaries are British and all moderate opinion in both countries welcomed the Viceroy's firm handling of a dangerous position. A Workers' and Peasants' Party had been formed with the aim of establishing a dictatorship of the proletariate on Russian lines and its leaders are closely in touch with the Comintern, the committee of the Third International, whose headquarters are in Moscow.

A strike of mill employees in Bombay was partly sustained by the aid of funds received from Moscow. Indeed for three years strikes were almost incessant in the Bombay cotton mills, involving sometimes 150,000 workers, and derailment of trains caused loss of life in more than one province.

In Bardoli in the Bombay Presidency landholders agitated against a periodical increase of " land revenue ", the movement being fomented by Communists and extremists. The Bombay Government re-opened the question and after inquiry contented itself with a smaller increase.

Indeed the government can claim, that not only in the case of Bardoli but throughout India its policy in regard to land revenue has been moderate and considerate. It is an annual payment made by holders of agricultural land dating back longer than history records, although varying in amount per acre at different times and places. The Mogul Emperors usually took one third of the total produce, while under British rule a money payment is collected corresponding usually to perhaps a tenth or twentieth of the crop.

Even Mr. G. T. Garratt, who in "An Indian Commentary" showed sympathy with some of the criticisms levied against British rule, holds that " it is most improbable that any future government will reduce substantially the amount, which the cultivator pays directly to the State ".

No one would deny that hard cases may have arisen occasionally under the land revenue system or any other system. But the practical problem would be to discover any better system to take its place and the present writer can think of no alternative except a tax on agricultural income, which is at present free from income tax. This would presumably be subject to exemption of the smaller incomes and would not be likely to find favour with the politicians who declaim against the land revenue. Moreover the land revenue system has the outstanding advantages of simplicity and cheapness in collection.

Unless Indian opinion favours such a change, the sound policy appears to be a careful administration of the existing

system of land revenue, giving exemption or relief so far as possible in cases of real hardship. This is substantially the present policy and so long as the cultivator is treated with consideration and assisted by suitable legislation and by suitable administrative measures in times of famine or scarcity, he will not join in anti-government agitation.

The present campaign started by the Congress against payment of taxes is sheer revolution and a strong line should be taken against the prime movers.

The conditions of industrial labour in India are at present under investigation by the Whitley Commission. The strike-fever has abated, except in Bombay City, and it is evident that discontent was due to artificial stimulation. No doubt the reduction of staffs in mills and railway workshops on the introduction of improved machinery was also a disturbing factor, although perhaps inevitable.

On the whole one may hope that India will preserve its sanity in spite of Communist agitation.

CHAPTER II

DEMOCRACY AND ILLITERACY?

HAVING tried to propose methods for the elimination of the four hates which obsess Indian political life, I turn to a discussion of the question whether democracy is in any case feasible, assuming the existence of a placid political atmosphere.

Illiteracy is an obstacle. The following figures are taken from the Statistical Abstract for British India, 1929 (H.M. Stationery Office):

Population of British India in 1921 ...	247,003,293
Literate males	16,508,700
Percentage of literacy among males ...	13%
Literate females	2,145,904
Percentage of literacy among females ...	1.8%
Number of pupils in schools and colleges in British India in 1916-17	7,851,946
in 1926-27	11,157,496

From these figures it can be inferred that many years must elapse before literacy can become general even among the male population, and many difficulties stand in the way.

Economic conditions often make education of boys in India unpopular with parents and caste rules often shut out children of the "untouchable" classes. Even greater obstacles arise in regard to the education of girls, a fact illustrated from one point of view by recent events in Afghanistan, where the typical Moslem attitude to female education was exhibited.

I once read an interesting report from an Indian official, who had visited a village school, concluding in the following terms—"Average attendances: Boys 42, Girls 5. The master is warned to attract girls." No doubt the master found it difficult. Yet without a great development of female education India is unlikely to make satisfactory progress.

Unfortunately, as the Hartog Committee found, even some of the children who pass through the schools lapse into illiteracy, and many attend for one year or less.

I may say at the outset that I see no immediate prospect of anything like democratic control of the Central Government of India. I shall return to this point. Meanwhile it may be considered whether democracy is possible in the Provinces. It is not, for an illiterate people can exercise no real control over policy, even if it is nominally given sovereign power. An illiterate people can only hold its representatives

responsible in a general way. Such a people cannot devise policies, but it can be shrewd enough in the long run to see whether its representatives devise policies conducive to its interests. This check exists even under an absolute monarchy or bureaucracy. But it can no doubt be assumed that the Indian provinces will continue to have Legislative Councils and that their composition and powers will be changed, at least in some provinces.

How should they be constituted? This depends on the composition of the population. To illustrate the elements in the Indian population I take the following figures of the census of 1921. These figures are for the main provinces and states, omitting a few small areas—

Total population (including Indian States), 318,942,480, divided as follows by religion:

Hindus	216,711,722
Mahomedans	67,982,694
Sikhs	3,237,449
Jains	1,178,596
Christians	4,753,937
Buddhists (practically all in Burma) ...	11,571,235
Parsis	101,778
Animists	9,773,659
Others	3,631,410

The Hindus are again sub-divided into many castes representing nearly every grade of civilization and the principal sub-divisions for the present purpose are, in round numbers—

Brahmins	14 millions
Other advanced classes ... ... probably	6 millions
Agricultural landowners, peasants and workers (excluding untouchables) ... ... probably	125 millions
Jungle tribes (almost savages) between	10 and 20 millions
Untouchables ... ... probably	50 or 60 millions

Among the Christians 175,000 Europeans and 113,000 Anglo-Indians must not be forgotten.

With this formidably heterogeneous population, disturbed as already noted by the "four hates", two alternative methods, at least, of forming a Legislative Council suggest themselves. One would be to elect or nominate only persons belonging to the most intelligent and educated strata of society, the other to elect or nominate representatives of all classes. Until the year 1921 the former alternative was substantially adopted; since the Montagu - Chelmsford Reforms a half-hearted adoption of the second alternative

has prevailed. The decisive fact is that the Indian "intelligentsia" has too little sympathy with the other classes for reliance to be placed on it as their sole guardian and from this fact, among others, arises the need for separate electorates or some other device ensuring fair representation of the less educated classes and the less vocal minorities. In a general electorate the high-caste Hindu is likely to be chosen three times out of four and especially so if the vote is restricted by a high property qualification.

Proportionate representation of communities seems a good general rule. But the importance of Europeans and Parsis commercially entitles them to more than proportionate representation. It is beyond the scope of the present pamphlet to suggest precisely how many seats should be reserved for each community in each province.

Nevertheless the importance of representation of the backward classes needs to be emphasized. The "untouchables", who number more than 15 per cent. of the population in several provinces, should have substantial representation. The jungle tribes are also numerous and should be adequately represented, either by members of their own community or by some other method. Indian Christians too, and perhaps the Jains, must have some seats.

The case for separate representation of Mahomedans is familiar and the same may be said of the Sikhs in the Punjab. It is probable that the Mahomedans will not agree peacefully to anything but communal representation. Landowners, peasants and agricultural and industrial workers, as well as capitalists, all need representation.

Councils composed of the elements suggested will be less well-groomed than their predecessors, but perhaps more serviceable and the intelligentsia will be able to survive the shock, as the members of the British Parliament grew accustomed in course of time to the cloth cap of Mr. Keir Hardie. A few members of the backward classes already sit in the Legislative Councils.

Nomination may be a more suitable way of filling some seats than election. Bhils and other Jungle tribes would be content with nominated representatives. The untouchables might perhaps cope successfully with the intricacies of an election. In some instances the backward classes, *i.e.*, jungle tribes and untouchables could find representatives of sufficient education from their own communities. In some cases they could be more suitably represented by British officials or by missionaries.

Can self-government in provincial affairs be safely entrusted to Councils constructed on the lines suggested? Finance and

law and order are the departments over whose control the fight will rage most fiercely. It would be unsound to make great changes in the composition of Provincial Legislative Councils and at the same time transfer to the Ministers absolute control over all departments. Every part of the constitutional mechanism would be in an experimental condition. The electorate would be limited, inexperienced and largely illiterate, the Councils would contain many members with little or no knowledge of politics, the "Cabinets" would be inorganic collections of individuals. For at present parties in India are not developed on sound lines, but rest more on a religious and communal basis, and extension of the electorate along with reconstitution of the councils is bound to cause temporary confusion of political groups.

Suppose that Swarajists obtain a majority, will they carry on the government with loyalty and commonsense? At least it is necessary for Provincial Governors to retain authority to intervene in order to secure necessary expenditure or prevent dangerous and unfair legislation or serious disorder. During the nine or ten years, which have elapsed since the last reforms were introduced, Indian political leaders as a class have not displayed the balance and *savoir faire*, which would entitle them to complete confidence. Nor can the masses in India be expected to rely on the goodwill of leaders drawn largely from a class, which claims privileges unheard-of in other lands. Some day leaders may arise more representative of the electorate and the population at large and not merely of their own caste and class.

In some provinces the reforms already granted have at times been suspended for want of Indian co-operation. This cannot be attributed only to dissatisfaction with the concessions made, and since the proposals, which will emerge from the present inquiry, will also probably fail to satisfy the extremists, it cannot be expected that all the leading politicians in India will try to make the resultant constitution work. Indeed the so-called National Congress has already begun a fresh campaign of revolutionary agitation.

How the necessary limitations to responsible self-government in the provinces should be secured is a difficult question, which is likely to meet with different answers in different provinces. The Madras Presidency may, with limitations in the spheres of finance and "law and order" and safeguards against legislation damaging to particular communities, conceivably receive self-government in internal affairs. The Punjab is so occupied with the conflicting interests of Hindu, Moslem and Sikh, that some sections would choose to retain the existing constitution rather than run the risks involved

in a nearer approach to self-government, unless they are given the share of representation which they claim. And it is doubtful whether these conflicting claims to representation made by different communities in the Punjab can be reconciled.

However, an approach to fairer representation of all sections of the community and in some provinces a cautious extension of the sphere of self-government may be expected. Within the limits of this pamphlet it is impossible to forecast in detail the probable adjustments in each province. Within a suitable framework, differences may be allowed in order to meet local conditions.

A paradox of the present situation in India is that although the demand for self-government has come from the "intelligentsia", the actual result of reform has been and will be to place more political power in the hands of the less educated, including non-Brahmin Hindus, Mahomedans and even untouchables. This is one reason why the extremists, who belong chiefly to the intelligentsia, have opposed the Simon Commission. They do not want real democracy, which is alien to Brahmin ideas, and they foresaw that the result of the labours of the Simon Commission would be more democratic than their own ideal.

But the British Government has laid down responsible self-government as the goal and will not consent to hand over affairs to a narrow clique of upper-class politicians.

Nevertheless the alternative directions in which constitutional development might some day proceed in India deserve study. Autocracy and bureaucracy are the obvious possibilities. The former is the natural constitution in India and was universal before European intervention. Even to-day, out of nearly 320 millions, 72 millions of the population are governed by more or less autocratic methods by Indian Princes, and the methods followed are similar whether the Prince be Hindu or Mahomedan. In the sacred literature of the Hindus, government by a rajah is assumed and it is laid down that the ideal rajah should be guided by a small council of ministers and devote himself to the welfare of his people. These ideas are still present, although modified by modern conceptions, and the removal, or partial removal, of European control would make their revival more probable.

Provincial Governors in India, and still more the Governor-General, have certain autocratic powers, and some at least of these powers should be retained. This is reasonable in view of the undeveloped political state of the mass of the population. Such powers can also be used for the protection of minorities. It is quite impossible to model the constitutions of different countries on the same plan unless the

character of the peoples is the same, and any attempt to imitate British or, say, Canadian models too closely in framing constitutions for India is foredoomed to failure.

An admixture of autocracy in Indian Government appears necessary, especially in the interests of the less articulate classes, and the minorities. It will also serve as a guarantee of stability and of security for the services.

The power of the official in India is being gradually limited. But the officials still compose the "steel frame". The Indian Civil Service and Indian Police Service are the guardians of public order and to a great extent of the proper administration of justice. Some Indians to-day, in their eagerness for political liberty, resent the necessary measures of control taken by magistrates and police, forgetting or pretending to forget that similar measures are necessary in the most democratic countries. No country with a competent government will tolerate disorderly demonstrations in the public streets, and any competent police force must use force when necessary to prevent riot and arson. Whatever constitution an Indian province obtains, the police will remain, and will continue to act in what the Indian press terms a "high-handed" fashion, which indeed is the proper function of a policeman!

Every country must have its steel frame.

A minor suggestion occurs to me, which may possibly commend itself to Indian politicians; it is that Indian political institutions should have, so far as possible, Indian names. Britons can imagine that they would suffer acutely if the name of Parliament were changed to Mejliss or Sabha, and perhaps Indians would rejoice if a Legislative Council could be called a Sabha and a minister a Diwan. The word "panchayat" certainly has a special charm for Indian ears, like "Mesopotamia" in the opinion of the proverbial old lady. The question of names is of secondary importance, but the opinions of Indians upon it would be interesting.

CHAPTER III

The Central Government

"THE Government of India", which sits at Delhi in the cold weather and Simla in the hot weather, has charge, under the control of the Secretary of State for India, of all legislation affecting India as a whole, except those constitutional and financial measures which are placed before the British Parliament. It also has charge of the defence of India, customs, income-tax, and internal security, except so far as the latter is under provincial administration, and of foreign affairs, and other departments which need not be enumerated.

The Viceroy and Governor-General is assisted by a small council whose members administer the departments, while the Political Department, which deals with matters affecting the Indian States (formerly known as the Native States), is in the hands of the Viceroy himself.

Of the two legislative bodies, the first, the Legislative Assembly, consists of 104 elected and 41 nominated members. The second chamber, the Council of State, is composed of 34 elected and 26 nominated members. Financial expenditure, except in the Army Department and Political Department, is voted by the Legislative Assembly. It is important however to note that the Governor-General is empowered to certify that particular financial measures are essential and by this means to enforce them over the heads of the Legislative Assembly.

An interesting illustration of this power was the "certification" by Lord Reading in 1923 of the increase of the salt duty from one rupee four annas to two rupees eight annas per maund (82 lbs.). The Finance Member had proposed the enhancement in the previous year to meet a budget deficit, but it was rejected. In 1923 he again appealed to the Assembly for support on the same grounds. The Assembly again refused, although the increased duty involved only a petty addition to the domestic expenditure of any Indian household. In the Council of State the increase had been carried. Lord Reading's order "certifying" its necessity nevertheless elicited an outcry in the press and on public platforms out of proportion to the importance of the change and was stigmatized as an insult to the Legislative Assembly.

Similar powers are exercised by the Governor-General in regard to legislation necessary in his opinion for internal security. Recently the Government of India decided that

legislation to authorize the expulsion from India of non-Indian Communists was essential to prevent revolutionary activities by British Communists and Bolshevik agents. Speakers in the Legislative Assembly attacked the proposal as tyrannical and raised doubts of the genuineness of the danger. It was further suggested that the bill was the thin end of the wedge and would be followed by similar measures against Indian Communists. While the measure was still pending, the use of bombs and a pistol in the Legislative Assembly itself demonstrated the reality of the menace, already proved by sanguinary riots in Bombay. On a division the Public Safety Bill had been rejected only by the casting vote of the President of the Assembly. The Government re-introduced the bill, but the President intervened to prevent its progress on the ground that discussion would interfere with fair trial of alleged Communists in the Meerut Conspiracy Case, which is still before the Courts. His action prompted Lord Irwin in the exercise of his emergency powers to make an ordinance embodying the provisions of the bill.

Many illustrations might be given of similar failure by the Legislative Assembly to exhibit a calm and practical attitude. One was the rejection of a bill for the creation of an Indian Navy on the ground that control of the proposed navy was not given to the Assembly, which was constitutionally impossible, and this instance is the more striking because the proposal was a response to the frequent demand of Indian politicians for the "nationalization" of the armed forces.

The Council of State has displayed a higher order of statesmanship and shown that by a free use of powers of nomination a considerable body of intelligent legislators can be assembled. If efficiency alone were the criterion, the powers of the Legislative Assembly might be transferred to the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly abolished.

The conduct of the Assembly during the past nine years of its existence has not shown any fitness for greater powers.

It is noteworthy that the Legislative Assembly, apart from nominated members, rests on a much smaller electorate than the provincial Legislative Councils. The voters number less than a million or about one in 300 of the whole population! Undoubtedly the masses are unable to understand many of the issues discussed at Delhi and Simla, but they are none the less intimately concerned with the decisions made. Amendments in the Penal Code or the Civil Law are frequently made by the central government, tariffs imposed, laws about the control of "criminal tribes" enacted and the co-operative societies, a powerful ameliorative agency, were instituted by the central legislature in the pre-reform period. All these are subjects affecting the masses. But their

representation in the Assembly is too small to carry much weight. Labour, as such, is represented by a single member and he is a Brahmin! The poorer class of cultivators and the agricultural labourers have scarcely a voice in deliberations at Delhi and Simla.

Fuller representation of these classes in the Central Government, perhaps by means of nomination, appears desirable.

In several departments the members of the intelligentsia, who take the most prominent part in Indian politics, are ill-fitted to control policy. They know little or nothing of military or naval affairs, for the caste system has demarcated the learned and the fighting classes. In such technical matters as aviation, transport and scientific agriculture, they have, with few exceptions, no qualifications. Indeed modern conceptions of administration are only recently beginning to permeate the Indian mind.

British influence in legislation and administration has conduced in a high degree to a gradual advance in civilization. Thugs have been wiped out, suttee prohibited, infanticide and slavery suppressed, and the laws controlling marriage and the age of consent improved. Under Indian control some of these evils would revive.

The preservation of order demands a strong hand, which only British authority can supply, for the alternative of a return to the autocratic rule of Indian Princes would not satisfy British or Indian sentiment.

Present conditions are fraught with difficulty. The Communist International not long ago declared that "the leadership and direction of the Indian movement are in our hands" and "the victorious revolutionary trade union in Bombay" received somewhat premature eulogies. The preparation of bombs for the Simon Commission is one example to prove that the threats are more than empty verbiage. Indians have been trained by Communists at Tashkend in the methods of revolution.

The disturbances of the year 1919 in the Punjab are now believed to have been fomented by Bolshevik agents. States bordering on the Indian frontier have been instigated from time to time to assist in the proposed break-up of British rule.

In the Indian Police Force British Officers supply an efficiency and impartiality for which at present there is no alternative source, while the British Army and Royal Navy protect India effectually and at moderate cost from foreign invasion, which was threatened during the Great War by Germany, again in 1919 by Afghanistan and once more in 1930 by a turbulent frontier chieftain. The part played by

district officers of the Indian Civil Service, Political Department and Police Service in preserving order by impartial control is familiar, and communal tension among other factors renders them indispensable.

An Indian magistrate and revenue officer once propounded to his official superior, the Collector and District Magistrate, the opinion that all nations should be ruled by foreigners. This, he maintained, was the only guarantee of fair play. In India, at least, the deep cleavages between different sections of the population described in the first chapter of this book, require to be bridged by impartial outsiders. Sir Abdur Rahim as President of the All-India Moslem League in 1925, advised his hearers to recognize frankly that in existing circumstances the presence of the British was justified by necessity. The position has not changed.

To-day great value is attached in many quarters to representative institutions, and the importance of the expert in administration is sometimes forgotten. But no one in consulting an engineer will consider his nationality the most important consideration, and the same principle may be applied in the choice of administrators, especially in a country which is backward in material civilization.

A further point of great importance has now arisen, vitally affecting the constitution of the Central Government, namely the intention of H.M's Government to bring the Indian Princes into the discussion of constitutional changes. This may alter the whole fabric of the Central Government, but it is too early to forecast what form it will take when (as is likely to happen) the Indian Princes are brought into closer association with British India.

CHAPTER IV

The Congress and the Nehru Report

THE Congress attracts more attention than it deserves. A revolutionary body, blown about by every wind of doctrine, at one moment propounding a policy of sham democracy within the British Empire, at the next extolling a vague independence without provision against external or internal dangers, ready to use Communist fanaticism as a temporary ally, and oscillating between violence and non-violence with the versatility of a quick-change artiste, it has abandoned all claims to consistency and is destitute of a constructive policy.

Until December 1929 the Congress stood by the " Nehru Report ", which it has now abandoned, but in spite of this abandonment, the report is worth studying as an indication of the lines, along which some Indian politicians would plan a constitution.

In the summer of 1928 a great effort had been made by the All-Parties Conference, which claimed to represent all sections of Indian political opinion, to draft a constitution commanding the universal approval of Indians. Even boycotters of the Simon Commission had realized the importance of expressing their views. Moslem opinion is now almost universally opposed to the Nehru Report, which resulted from this endeavour, and the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha have also rejected it.

The Report recommended a gigantic leap in the dark. The Secretary of State and his Council were to be abolished, and an Indian Parliament set up, including under H.M. the King, a Senate of 200 members and a House of Representatives of 500. The franchise for the lower Chamber was to be enjoyed by everyone of either sex over the age of 21. In the provinces, legislation was to be placed in the hands of the Governors and legislative councils containing one member per 100,000 of the population. Every province was to have five ministers. All expenditure by the central government was to be voted by the House of Representatives.

The judicial system was to be altered by the establishment of Supreme Courts in all the provinces, exercising the functions hitherto discharged by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

The provinces were to be re-divided on a linguistic basis, Sind to be separated from Bombay and made a province, and the North-West Frontier Province to receive a constitution.

Seats were to be reserved for Mahomedans where they form a minority of the population and for non-Mahomedans in the North-West Frontier Province. Otherwise the constituencies were to be general constituencies embracing every section of the population.

The proposed central government would, according to this scheme, inherit the rights and functions of the present Government of India towards the Indian States.

Pandit Motilal Nehru and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru were the authors of the report.

The All-Parties Conference failed to achieve real unanimity on the basis of the report. A loophole was left for the parties aiming at complete independence, and several provisos made regarding the separation of Sind from Bombay. A resolution was also passed declaring the question of separate representation for different communities in the Punjab to be subject to review after ten years.

Before discussing the value of this contribution to the problem of India's future, it may be noted that a meeting of Mahomedans of every shade of political thought, over which H.H. the Aga Khan presided on December 31st 1928 and January 1st 1929, unanimously insisted on the following points not admitted by the All-Parties Conference: separate electorates everywhere for Mahomedans, the reservation of one-third of the seats in the legislatures for Mahomedans, and statutory provision for the representation of Mahomedans in the public services. The claim for the separation of Sind, where there is a large majority of Mahomedans, was re-affirmed, although the Hindus of that area regard the proposal with grave apprehension.

Other sections of the population besides the Moslems undoubtedly reject the Nehru Report wholeheartedly. It offers no security for the interests of untouchables and other "depressed classes", or of Indian Christians or Europeans. Sikhs, who are an important element in the population of the Punjab, were disregarded and consequently indignant at this unofficial attempt at constitution-building.

The impossibility of a solution satisfying all classes has been demonstrated. How far can the recommendations made in this document be regarded as sound?

The abolition of the Secretary of State and his Council is presumably outside the sphere of practical politics, and would dissatisfy many Indians, who consider the Secretary of State as the source of the liberty which they possess.

The changes proposed in the central government are far too sweeping to be undertaken by a stroke of the pen. Recently Mr. Baldwin has been accused by some critics of excessive

rashness for extending the franchise in Great Britain to women between the ages of 21 and 30, all able to read and write. *Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Nehru would add approximately 100 million persons to the register and simultaneously authorize them to control a continent.*

Changes proposed in the provinces are equally drastic and overwhelming. In a moment pseudo-democracies, of populations nine-tenths illiterate and torn by factions, are to be established in newly-divided areas. Five ministers (which sounds a nice number!) are to enjoy the task of government over peoples speaking, so far as possible, one language, and in any case not more than three or four, and basking in the sunshine of liberty (?) It is at present an empty dream.

Serious difficulties arise in any endeavour to re-divide the provinces on the basis of language. In many districts (to say nothing of provinces) there are two principal languages. In Belgaum in the Bombay Presidency, Kanarese and Marathi compete in importance. In the neighbouring district of Bijapur there is Hindustani in addition. Even the proposed small province of Sind has three or four languages. Sentiment is divided on the question of such re-division, and the financial consequences would be far-reaching and make careful enquiry necessary before such changes could be made. Not long ago a committee inquiring into the feasibility of home rule for Wales found the financial obstacles insuperable.

Army expenditure could not in the immediate future, at any rate, be safely entrusted to an Indian Parliament.

The apparent generosity of general electorates of all adults disappears, when it is realized that the mass of the population is too backward and inexperienced to secure fair representation under such a system.

The Indian Princes have clearly shown their unwillingness to be controlled in any degree by a Parliament of British India.

In fact the Nehru Report helps little in the search for a better constitution. Since throwing over this scheme, the Congress has not indicated what form of government it would propose.

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CHAPTER V

THE INDIAN PRINCES

THE existence of Indian Princes is well known to everyone. Their achievements in sport are frequently recorded and some of them are well known in this country. But the general public has only a vague notion of their functions in India and of the rôle which they fill in the government.

The greater part of India, known as British India, is divided into provinces and is governed by the methods already described in outline. But the rest of the country with a population of 72 millions and an area of about 700,000 square miles is still composed of Indian States and governed, subject to certain varying degress of British control, by Indian Princes. They are 700 in number and among them more than 100 exercise sovereign rights in their own territory, while the rest have different grades of importance; some holding only the position of landowners exempt from payment of land revenue. The great Indian Princes are, normally, advised rather than controlled in their internal affairs, but the British power, which is paramount in India, intervenes when necessary to prevent serious lapses from good government.

Questions of foreign policy are outside the sphere of the Indian Princes and are decided by the Central Government of India and the Imperial Government. Formerly diplomatic consultation between the Princes was strictly forbidden, but Lord Hardinge introduced a relaxation of this rule in the year 1914, when he summoned a conference of Indian Princes. Five years later a Chamber of Princes was established, which provides an opportunity for discussion of affairs of general interest. Although some of the leading Princes, holding strong opinions about their own status, feel unable to meet with others in this Chamber, yet it has provided a convenient mechanism for interchange of views and joint action.

The largest Indian state, ruled by the Nizam of Hyderabad, has a population of 12 millions and an area greater than England and Wales. The Nizam is a Mahomedan, but his subjects are mostly Hindus. Udaipur, Kashmir, Mysore and Baroda are among the other states with wide areas and large populations.

Within their own territory the Princes are usually regarded with loyal respect, for the Hindu reveres a sovereign as a divine personage and is ready to accept with submission

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manifestations of princely favour or disfavour, unless they pass all bounds of moderation. Not only so, but many of the Princes are able and progressive rulers. The Indian politician of British India is more critical than the subjects of the Indian States and in many cases disposed to consider the Indian States as an undesirable survival, especially when he finds that reckless speeches or publications are not tolerated in their territories.

British readers may be interested to learn what measure of good administration prevails in the Indian States. On this subject no generalization covering all the facts is possible, for every degree of good and bad government can be found. Recently a Maharaja abdicated to avoid an inquiry into his connection with a murder and attempt at kidnapping committed on an important highway in Bombay City. Even more recently a Mussulman ruler in Sind has squandered his revenues and mismanaged his state until it became necessary to appoint a British financial adviser to ward off bankruptcy and secure the payment of government servants.

On the other hand Mysore, after a period of British management, was restored to the control of its Maharaja and is now well administered and progressive. Baroda enjoys the distinction, rare in India, of a system of theoretically universal education, which has achieved a limited measure of success. Other Maharajas, like the late Maharaja of Kolhapur, whom I knew personally, have been eminent in social reform. He opposed strenuously the absurdities of the Hindu caste system, and carried his theories into practice by dining with "untouchables".

The Indian Princes cannot be stigmatized as mere survivals of an earlier, more primitive epoch, for some of them at least have taken the lead along modern lines of development.

Maintenance of the States is the policy of the Imperial Government and Indian politicians must surrender any notion of their disappearance in a democratic or oligarchic Indian federation as outside practical politics.

The Indian States have shown in the inquiry held by the Butler Commission, that they rely on relations with the Crown, represented by the Viceroy, for a guarantee of their own permanence. But apart from British control it would be far more probable that the Indian politicians of Congress fame would go down before the Indian States or some foreign invader than that they would succeed in subverting the personal authority of the Princes.

Unanimous resolutions passed at a meeting of the Princes in Bombay in March 1928 included a determination to ensure

the rule of law in their States and to promote the welfare and good government of their subjects. This policy will necessitate, in some instances, a limitation of the personal expenditure of the Princes and renders supervision by the Crown through the Viceroy essential. Representative institutions with limited powers of discussion have been established in some of the States and supply a means for expression of public opinion. In return for the control exercised by the British power, the Princes receive security from external or internal aggression.

The findings of the Butler Commission, which recently reported on the relations between the Crown, the Princes and British India may be shortly summarized as follows :—

(1) The Crown is the paramount power in India and its authority is dependent on political necessity and not restricted to the obligations recognized in treaties with the States.

(2) While upholding the authority of the Princes, the Crown will insist on proper administration.

(3) In relation with the States, the Crown is represented by the Viceroy and not by the Government of India.

Although the Princes are not completely satisfied with all the findings of the Butler Commission, recognition that their obligations are with the King-Emperor and that they are not subordinate to the Government of India has removed their chief anxiety.

Suitable machinery however is demanded for the adjustment of matters affecting both the States and British India. Among them the most prominent perhaps are questions of fiscal policy. India has an extensive protective tariff. The chief ports are in British India. The Government of India imposes duties, which affect the conditions of life in the Indian States, although the latter have no voice in determining the tariff and no share in its proceeds. Naturally fiscal policy has in these circumstances been determined by the interests of British India.

The control of coinage and of posts, telegraphs and railways is also in the hands of the Government of India and the Indian Princes are affected by measures taken in these departments, although they have no part in their elaboration.

Sir Manubhai Mehta, successively Prime Minister of Baroda and Bikaner, has drawn attention to one of the difficulties caused by development of railways. "If a railway is built through the territory of an Indian State, the strip along which the line is constructed falls under the sovereignty and police jurisdiction not of that State, but of the Government of India. This 'foreign land' within an Indian Prince's territory, besides limiting that Prince's sovereignty, is a practical nuisance to him. The Prince's subjects can go

there and make the most seditious speeches against him, and yet he cannot arrest them. This has happened often in recent years ". Some method could undoubtedly be found by legislation or otherwse to overcome this grievance.

Probably closer relations, on equal terms, will develop between " the two Indias ", British India and the Indian States, and facilitate a fair adjustment of mutual interests.

Sir Manubhai Mehta admits that administration in some of the States needs reform. " We admit that some of the States are backward : though not as backward as it is made out. We want these States to be brought up to the level of the more enlightened ones. But we wish that these reforms should come from within, perhaps in consultations among the Chamber of Princes, and not from without—that is, from British India. We wish British Indians nothing but well . . . But we want them to be equally fair to us. We want neither to dominate them nor to be dominated by them ".

The invitation of Indian Princes to the " Round Table Conference " in London will afford an opportunity for discussion of adjustments and possibly closer union between British India and the States.

CHAPTER VI

THE SERVICES. THE VICEROY AND GOVERNORS. CONCLUSION

FOR generations the Indian Civil Service has been the most important body in India. It has taken the chief part in governing India and a large part in administering justice. Order and progress in India have owed more in half a century past to the Indian Civil Service than to any other body. The Viceroy and those Governors who were not themselves members of this service to a great extent depended on the counsel of the "I.C.S." and villagers went to the same source for help in their difficulties. Next in importance as a factor in progress, with the possible exception of the Indian Police Service, I should place the work of engineers in irrigating millions of acres and developing railways and other means of transport. The work of the other departments has also maintained a high standard and as a result of good administration India has advanced greatly in material prosperity.

Mr. Lloyd George, adopting a phrase from a well-known writer, aptly described the services, mainly British, which preserve the fabric of civilization in India as "the steel frame" and affirmed the necessity of maintaining the steel frame unimpaired. This necessity remains unaltered.

The question of recruitment of the services should be regarded first from the viewpoint of efficiency and secondly only from that of racial percentages or progressive Indianization. To-day, of about 1,200 members of the Indian Civil Service more than 300 are Indians. Rapid strides towards Indianization have been made in the last ten years. It must further be remembered that many appointments of equal importance are held by members of the "provincial services" and that they are almost without exception Indians. The appointment of Indians to other civil services, except the Indian Police, has proceeded much further and in the Indian Educational Services for instance, recruitment of Europeans has ceased.

An inquiry into the recruitment and pay of the civil services in India was conducted a few years ago by the Lee Commission, which was composed partly of Europeans, partly of Indians, and presented an unanimous report. In the Indian Civil Service, which holds many of the chief administrative and judicial posts, the Commission recommended equal recruitment of Indians and Europeans, but actually the recruitment of Indians in recent years has exceeded 50 per cent.

One fact must be realized. The stability, impartiality, honesty and efficiency of the administration in India have been the achievements chiefly of British officials. In times of communal riots and other crises, Indians themselves have often preferred to have British officials to restore security. The reputation of the Briton for impartiality and incorruptibility is still high in spite of anti-British propaganda.

Individual Indians have exhibited the same qualities, but it is not yet demonstrated that Indians on the average can maintain an equal standard of administration. Refusal to accept bribes is even regarded by some Indians as a fault, and I have been told by an Indian government doctor that he had heard Indians complain on this ground that it was impossible to obtain satisfaction from European officers! Where this inverted standard of official morality can be found, it is not probable that an administration staffed entirely by Indians would be satisfactory.

Little demand is heard for Indianization of the higher grades in the Police, whose duties are among the most difficult and least pleasant. Nevertheless in that service too there has been substantial recruitment and promotion of Indians in the higher ranks.

In such technical affairs as canal construction, railways, surgery, and aviation the Briton in India is rightly recognized as an expert. It is possible to go further and recall that Britons have been engaged to surmount difficult problems of engineering in New York, South America and almost all parts of the world and to advise on administration in China and have helped to solve problems of finance and education in Egypt and many other countries.

Constitutional changes must not be permitted to interfere with orderly and progressive administration. To secure the necessary quota of British recruits in the services, recruitment should continue under the control of the Secretary of State. British recruits of the necessary numbers and calibre would not be attracted by service under the absolute control of the Provincial Governments in India.

In the Indian Army King's Commissions are now offered to Indians in increasing numbers. The gulf between the martial races and the intelligentsia limits the supply of cadets possessing the necessary mental and physical qualities. Most of the fighting races of India have not much aptitude for higher education, while Brahmins asd other intellectually advanced castes are by tradition, disposition and training averse from military service. Recently however the Skeen Committee held an inquiry which, although some of its recommendations were not adopted, led to the opening up of greater opportunities for Indians aspiring to a military career,

by means of training in the military colleges in this country, and a scheme for "Indianizing" some regiments is in process of execution.

The Government of India also attempted to constitute an Indian Navy partly officered by Indians, but the scheme failed to win the support of the Legislative Assembly. However wider prospects are now open to Indian personnel in the Royal Indian Marine.

Brigadier-General H. Rowan-Robinson, writing in "India" (July 1929) has shown clearly the magnitude of the task of defending India and the importance of India as a factor in the defence of the Empire and maintenance of Imperial communications. India "has roughly 6000 miles of coastline to guard and an equal length of land frontier". She stands on the highway between Europe and Australia and the other British possessions in the Far East.

These circumstances necessitate continuance of British control of military and naval affairs in India, and expenditure on the defence of India cannot safely be entrusted to the votes of the Legislative Assembly. Beyond the Indian frontier Afghanistan is a warlike power whose friendship is best secured by strong British rule in India. The Gurkhas in Nepal are a nation of soldiers who, in the absence of the British power, might regard parts of India as their natural spoil.

Consequently the safety of India herself depends on the maintenance of the efficiency of the Royal Navy, Indian Army and the British Army in India.

Not only the services, but the Viceroy and provincial Governors bear an immense burden. Increase in the powers of the legislatures has thrown on the Governors the duty in matters of the highest importance of certifying expenditure as necessary, prohibiting the introduction of dangerous legislative proposals and intervening personally in difficult problems of administration. In the year 1929, for instance, in Bombay, prolonged strikes and communal riots called for personal action by the Governor. If more power is taken from the British official and given to the legislatures, the task of the Governor will become even more arduous. Frequently he has no previous experience of India. Governors in the past have relied freely on the advice of senior members of the Indian Civil Service, and for a long time to come such counsel should be available, if calamitous mistakes are to be avoided. For this and many other reasons it is desirable to retain senior British officials in the inner councils of the provincial governments. In the majority of the provinces the Indian Civil Service supplies the Governors and in these cases long experience of the country proves of high value.

The selection of Governors will in future be a matter of increasing importance.

Still more the position of the Viceroy and Governor-General demands the highest qualities of statesmanship. Recent events, such as the problems of the Public Safety Bill and of the powers of the President of the Legislative Assembly, and the outbreak of violence in the Legislative Assembly itself, have illustrated the need for strong and prompt decisions by the head of the Central Government.

In conclusion I would emphasise a few points which are, in my opinion, of outstanding importance. First it may be noted that the Reforms of ten years ago gave a great increase of power to the representatives of the people, or some of the people, and that during the same period Indian recruitment in the services has increased rapidly. The system of Diarchy, a mixture of representative government and bureaucracy, instituted in pursuance of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, has proved workable in those provinces in which Indians have assisted whole-heartedly in its operation.

Since 1919 *there has been no fundamental change in the character or educational development of the Indian people.* Nor could it be expected. Consequently the time for complete representative government has not arrived.

Whatever constitutional changes may be thought proper, internal security, external security, financial stability and the interests of the backward classes and minorities require special consideration. In all these departments provision for some degree of British oversight appears indispensable.

Absolute power should not be allowed to fall into the hands of a small clique of politicians of limited experience, narrow outlook and more than doubtful loyalty. They are not fair representatives of the Indian people, a large section of which they treat as "untouchable". They have not the backing which would enable them to hold power, if it were given.

In view of the great constitutional changes recently made in India and the disturbances and difficulties, through which she has recently passed and is now passing, and in view also of the enmities which embitter Indian life, great caution is needed in making further changes.

The constitution need not follow British models. An Indian official, who was once discussing European dress with me, remarked "Your trousers look pleasant, no doubt, but we find them somewhat sultry". Local differences are as necessary in political constitutions as they are in dress.

A solution of the Indian problem promising genuine progress combined with security and fair play for all interests should not prove impossible. It must be a solution in which the services can and will co-operate.